

Produced by
OASIS
Older Alabamians System
of Information and Services
236 Goodwin Crest Drive
Homewood, AL 35219-0888
205-290-4451
1-800-671-6837

Disclaimer: In the provision of services and in employment practices, the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, creed, national origin, religion, age, or disability.

This material is available in alternate format upon request

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Please direct comments to the OASIS Program at 1-800-671-6837.

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Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services

The Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services consists of seven members, one from each United States Congressional District appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Alabama Senate. Three members must be individuals with disabilities selected from consumer disability organizations. One member must be a parent of a child with a disability. Three members must be selected from business and industry within the state. The terms of office are seven years. No member shall serve more than two full seven-year terms of office. If you would like to know the current members of the Alabama Board of Rehabilitation Services, please contact the State Office of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services at 334-293-7500 or toll-free at 1-800-441-7607.

Blind Services Division

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services assists eligible Alabamians who are blind or visually impaired in making informed choices to achieve full inclusion in society through employment, independent living, and social self-sufficiency. We do this by providing:

- A continuum of services from youth transition to older blind services, including skills training that enables people to remain independent in their home communities
- Individual and group counseling addressing adjustment to blindness
- Employment counseling, training, and job placement
- Resources for employers interested in hiring or retaining visually impaired employees
- Training in adaptive skills for reading, computer use, traveling, job seeking, and other skills which increase independence and work readiness
- Public education regarding the abilities of people who are blind or visually impaired
- Supported employment programs for people who have multiple disabilities and who are blind
- A clearinghouse for Alabamians seeking information and

referral regarding blindness and visual impairment

- The customers of Blind Services, Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services, are:

Blind or visually impaired Alabamians who require rehabilitation services to become employed or to live independently in their communities

- Businesses in Alabama which have hired or are considering hiring employees who are blind or visually impaired
- The taxpayers of Alabama who benefit from people who are blind or visually impaired being fully integrated into their communities. (Taxpayers also benefit from blind individuals entering employment and paying taxes while decreasing their dependence on public assistance).

OASIS Program

The Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services Older Alabamians System of Information and Services (OASIS) Program provides independent living services to persons who are age 55 and older, who are blind or visually impaired. Services are provided statewide and include rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility, adaptive aids, low vision exams and devices, support groups, and peer counseling. Those eligible for services are residents of Alabama, age 55 or older, and blind or functionally visually impaired.

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services Office Locations

Anniston

1910 Coleman Road
36207
256-240-8800
1-800-671-6834

Birmingham

236 Goodwin Crest Drive
35209
205-290-4400
1-800-671-6837

Decatur

621 Cherry Street, NE
35601
256-353-2754
1-800-671-6838

Dothan

795 Ross Clark Circle, NE, Ste. #2
36303
334-699-8600
1-800-275-0132

Gadsden

1100 George Wallace Drive

35903

256-547-6974

1-800-671-6839

Huntsville

3000 Johnson Road, SW

35805

256-650-1700

1-800-671-6840

Mobile

2419 Gordon Smith Drive

36617

251-479-8611

1-800-671-6842

Muscle Shoals

1450 East Avalon Avenue

35661

256-381-1110

1-800-275-0166

Opelika

520 West Thomason Circle

36801

334-749-1259

1-800-671-6835

Talladega
#4 Medical Office Park
35160
256-362-1300
1-800-441-7592

Tuscaloosa
1305 James I. Harrison Jr. Parkway, East
35405
205-554-1300
1-800-331-556

State Office
602 South Lawrence Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
334-293-7500
1-800-441-7578

Laws and Statutes Related to People with Blindness or Low Vision

Department of Rehabilitation Services

Code of Alabama, 1975

§§21-9-1 through 21-9-14

These statutes created the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services (ADRS) which is designed to provide rehabilitation services to eligible children and adults with disabilities throughout the state. ADRS is responsible for administering component programs and working with other agencies of the state to enable Alabama's children and adults with disabilities to achieve their maximum potential.

Rights of blind and otherwise physically disabled persons

Code of Alabama, 1975, §§ 21-7-1 through 21-7-10

These statutes are designed to encourage and enable the blind, the visually impaired, and the otherwise physically disabled to participate fully in the social and economic life of the state. The statutes include laws that guarantee the rights of the blind to full and free use of the streets, highways, sidewalks, walkways, public buildings, public facilities, and other public places.

Operation of vending stands by blind persons

Code of Alabama, 1975, §§ 21-1-40 through 21-1-41

These statutes create the Business Enterprise Program for the Blind of the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and designate the department as the State Licensing Agency pursuant to the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act. The laws provide for the establishment of vending facilities for operation by blind persons on real property owned, leased, or occupied by the State of Alabama.

Federal Program

Older Alabamians System of Information and Services

29 U.S.C. §§ 796j through 796l

This federal program is authorized by the federal Rehabilitation Act and is dedicated to renewing independent and rewarding lifestyles for Alabama's older adults who have vision problems. OASIS provides evaluation and referrals, instruction in independent living skills, adaptive equipment, low vision exams and aids, and mobility instruction. Qualified rehabilitation teachers, mobility specialists, and peer supporters work with individuals to teach new or adaptive methods of performing day-to-day activities. OASIS services are free and available regardless of financial need. Individuals 55 years of age or older who are experiencing visual problems may receive services. OASIS provides comprehensive and personalized independent living training. An advisory council composed of consumers and representatives from many groups that work with citizens with disabilities gives guidance to the OASIS staff to ensure quality services.

Rights and Privileges of the Blind in Alabama

To obtain a copy of "Rights and Privileges of the Blind in Alabama" contact:

Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind
Alabama Instructional Resource Center for the Blind
705 South Street East
P.O. Box 698
Talladega, AL 35160
256-761-3287
256-761-3237
1-800-848-4722

RESOURCE GUIDE

Statewide Agencies and Programs:

Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program (ADAP):

ADAP provides quality, legally based advocacy services to persons with disabilities through protecting, promoting, and expanding their rights.

Alabama Disabilities Advocacy Program

University of Alabama

P.O. Box 870395

Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0395

205-348-4928

800-826-1675

adap@adap.ua.edu

www.adap.net

ADA Hotline

This is a free information service within the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services and is operated by an assistant attorney general. Anyone can call the number to obtain information on rights and responsibilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and related laws and regulations. The ADA is a civil rights law for people with disabilities which includes anyone with a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits him or her in a major life activity. The ADA protects against discrimination in employment, public services, and with

respect to goods and services offered by private businesses.

800-205-9986

888-574-2257 (TTY)

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind

Alabama Institute for Deaf and Blind Regional Centers:

Each AIDB regional center offers a unique mixture of services developed according to the needs of the community it serves. Services may include programs for older citizens, orientation and mobility training, reading services, braille services, and information and referral.

AIDB Regional Center Locations

Birmingham

220 34th Street South

35222

205-328-3989 Voice/TTY

Fax: 205-323-3691

Dothan

111 Medical Drive

36303

334-677-6270 Voice/TTY

Fax: 334-793-7044

Huntsville

600 St. Clair Avenue, Bldg. #2
35801
256-539-7881 Voice/TTY
Fax: 256-532-0942

Mobile

1050 Government Street
36604
251-432-7777 Voice/TTY
Fax: 251-432-3199

Montgomery

432 East Jefferson Street
36104
334-262-0824 Voice/TTY
Fax: 334-262-7708

Muscle Shoals/Tuscumbia

512 North Main Street
35674
256-383-3503 Voice/TTY
Fax: 256-383-3562

Talladega

412 Cherry Street
35161
256-761-3370 Voice/TTY
Fax: 256-761-3693

Tuscaloosa

2412 Skyland Boulevard East

35405

205-345-2883 Voice/TTY

Fax: 205-345-4883

E.H. Gentry Technical Facility

The primary purpose of the E.H. Gentry Technical Facility is to provide quality services to individuals who are deaf, blind, and deaf-blind which will lead to maximum independence and employment. E.H. Gentry's main campus, along with eight Regional Centers located throughout Alabama, provide a statewide service delivery system for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired. E.H. Gentry serves adults 18 years old through senior years, providing individualized services including:

- Vocational evaluations and assessments
- Adjustment services-teaching practical skills in home and personal management including home care, cooking, Braille, and personal budgeting
 - Orientation and mobility
 - Job skills training
 - Upgrading literacy skills
- Assistive Technology- Specialized equipment and training to minimize barriers due to blindness and/or deafness
- Employment Services
- Counseling and Referral services
- Business Enterprise Program
- Residential Services

For more information, contact:
E.H. Gentry Technical Facility
1105 Fort Lashley Ave,
Talladega, Alabama 35160
256-761-3402
1-888-774-2335

Alabama Department of Senior Services

The Alabama Department of Senior Services offers a variety of services for the elderly, including transportation, information and referral, needs assessment, legal services, nutrition services, health services, continuing education, health screening, day care, volunteer opportunities, physical fitness, recreation, Medicaid waiver as well as various home delivered services and nursing home ombudsman services. These services are provided through Alabama's Area Agencies on Aging, listed below. For more information contact the age line at 1-800-243-5463.

Department of Senior Services
201 Monroe Street, RSA Tower, Suite #350
Montgomery, AL 36130-1851
334-242-5743
877-425-2243
www.AlabamaAgeline.gov

Alabama's Area Agencies on Aging

Northwest Alabama Council of Local Governments

P.O. Box 2603, 103 Student Drive
Muscle Shoals, AL 35662

256-389-0500

800-838-5845

Counties: Colbert, Franklin, Lauderdale, Marion, Winston

West Alabama Regional Commission

4200 Highway 69 North, Suite #1

Northport, AL 35473

205-333-2990

800-432-5030

Counties: Bibb, Fayette, Greene, Hale, Lamar, Pickens,
Tuscaloosa

Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging

209 Cloverdale Circle

Alabaster, AL 35007

205-670-5770

866-570-2998

www.m4a-alabama.org

Counties: Blount, Chilton, Shelby, St. Clair, Walker

Office of Senior Citizens Services

Cooper Green Mercy Hospital

1515 6th Avenue S.; Suite 607

Birmingham, AL 35205

205-325-1416

Fax: 205-325-1429

Counties: Jefferson

East Alabama Regional Planning and
Development Commission

1130 Quintard Avenue, Suite #300

Anniston, AL 36202

256-237-6741

800-239-6741

Counties: Calhoun, Chambers, Cherokee, Clay, Cleburne,
Coosa, Etowah, Randolph, Talladega, Tallapoosa

South Central Alabama Development Commission

5900 Carmichael Place

Montgomery, AL 36117

334-244-6903

800-243-5463

Counties: Bullock, Butler, Crenshaw, Lowndes, Macon, Pike

Alabama Tombigbee Regional Commission

107 Broad Street

Camden, AL 36726

334-682-4234

888-617-0500

Counties: Choctaw, Clarke, Conecuh, Dallas, Marengo,
Monroe, Perry, Sumter, Washington, Wilcox

Southern Alabama Regional Council on Aging

1075 South Brannon Stand Road

Dothan, AL 36305

334-793-6843

800-239-3507

Counties: Barbour, Coffee, Covington, Dale, Geneva,
Henry, Houston

South Alabama Regional Planning Commission

110 Beauregard Street, Suite #207

Mobile, AL 36633

251-433-6541

800-243-5463

Counties: Baldwin, Escambia, Mobile

Central Alabama Aging Consortium

818 South Perry Street

Montgomery, AL 36104

334-240-4666

800-264-4680

Counties: Autauga, Elmore, Montgomery

Lee Russell Council of Government

2207 Gateway Drive

Opelika, AL 36801-6834

334-749-5264

877-743-3739

Counties: Lee, Russell

North Central Alabama Regional Council of
Governments

216 Jackson Street, S.E.

Decatur, AL 35602

256-355-4515

Counties: Cullman, Lawrence, Morgan

Top of Alabama Regional Council of
Governments

5075 Research Drive, N.W.

Huntsville, AL 35805

256-830-0818

Counties: DeKalb, Jackson, Limestone, Madison, Marshall

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

OASIS Program:

OASIS provides free independent living services to Alabamians who are age 55 and older and visually impaired to assist them in setting and achieving goals to remain independent in their homes and communities. Services provided include rehabilitation teaching, orientation and mobility, adaptive aids, low vision exams, low vision devices, support groups, and peer counseling.

OASIS Program

205-290-4450

1-800-671-6837

www.rehab.alabama.gov/OASIS

Vocational Rehabilitation Service

This service provides free vocational rehabilitation services to eligible Alabamians with disabilities. The consumer develops an Individualized Plan for Employment with the assistance of a rehabilitation counselor. Services may include vocational counseling, training, placement, and technology. A listing of office locations for ADRS is available on Page 6.

www.rehab.alabama.gov

1-800-441-7607

State of Alabama Client Assistance Program (SACAP):

SACAP is funded by the federal government to assist people in understanding their rights and responsibilities in obtaining vocational rehabilitation services through agencies such as the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.

SACAP

400 South Union Street, Suite #465

Montgomery, AL 36104

334-293-7236

800-228-3231

www.sacap.alabama.gov

Services for Veterans

Veterans Administration:

Veterans of the military who are visually impaired, whether or not service connected, may qualify for benefits ranging from

low vision evaluations and counseling on useful devices to extensive rehabilitative services at regional centers. The Visual Impairment Services Team can also refer veterans for other available services. In Alabama, contact:

Visual Impairment Services Team (VIST) Coordinator
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Southeastern Blind Rehabilitation Center
700 South 19th Street
Birmingham, AL 35233
205-933-8101 ext. 4389
http://www.birmingham.va.gov/services/Visual_Impairment.asp

Alabama Blinded Veterans Association (ABVA):

The ABVA is an organization of blinded veterans that will provide assistance to other blinded veterans throughout the state. Over the years ABVA has attempted to provide assistance to blinded veterans in a variety of ways and with a variety of programs. For years ABVA has conducted the National Field Service Program assisting veterans in adjusting to blindness; obtaining federal, state, and local benefits to which they are entitled; receiving blind rehabilitation; and overcoming any obstacles they may encounter. For more information, contact:

Mike Lewis, President
205-478-6999
Lewis7410@gmail.com

Willie Kelly, Secretary
205-941-1126
Wilkelly@bellsouth.net

Aids and Appliances

The following companies offer products such as watches, canes, and writing guides for people who are blind and visually impaired. They also offer aids for household, personal, and recreational use.

Ambutech

34 DeBaets Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
Canada R2J3S9
1-800-561-3340
www.ambutech.com

American Printing House for the Blind

1839 Frankfort Avenue
P.O. Box 6085
Louisville, KY 40206-0085
502-895-2405
1-800-223-1839
www.aph.org

Captek Science Products

1043 Lancaster Avenue
Berwyn, PA 19312
1-800-888-7400
www.captek.net
scienceproduct.org

Cleveland Sight Center
1909 East 101st Street
Cleveland, OH 44106
216-791-8118
www.clevelandsightcenter.org

Freedom Scientific
11800 31st Court N.
St. Petersburg, FL 33716-1805
1-877-775-9474
www.freedomscientific.com

Independent Living Aids
137 Rano Street
Buffalo, NY 14207
1-800-537-2118
www.independentliving.com

Lighthouse International
111 E 59th Street
New York City, NY 10022
1-800-829-0500
www.lighthouse.org

G. W. Micro
725 Airport North Office Park
Fort Wayne, IN 46825
260-489-3671
www.gwmicro.com

LS&S Group
145 River Rock Drive
Buffalo, NY 14207
1-800-468-4789
www.LSSproducts.com

Maxi Aids, Inc.
P.O. Box 3209
42 Executive Blvd. Farmingdale, NY 11735
1-800-522-6294 www.maxiaids.com

1-NOIR Medical Technologies
P.O. Box 159
6155 Pontiac Trail
South Lyon, MI 48178
800-521-9746
www.noirmedical.com

Optelec US
3030 Enterprise Court, #C
Vista, CA 92081
1-800-828-1056
www.optelec.com

Optical South
951 Snider Road
Brewton, AL 36426
251-236-0111
www.opticalsouth.com
Email: opticalsouth@yahoo.com

Radio Shack

(Check local phone book.) They may carry talking watches, talking clocks, mini-cassette players, etc.

UAB Center for Low Vision Rehabilitation

1720 University Blvd., #405

Birmingham, AL 35233

205-488-0736

UAB School of Optometry/UAB Eye Care

HPB

1716 University Boulevard

Birmingham, AL 35294-0010

205-975-2020

Access to Print Materials

Audio and Braille

Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically

Handicapped, a division of the Alabama Public Library

Service, provides books, magazines, playback equipment, accessories, information services, and technology to

enable eligible Alabamians to access published materials.

Materials are sent by mail, and no postage is required to send or return the items. You can obtain further information and an application by contacting the library.

Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically
Handicapped - Alabama Public Library Service
6030 Monticello Drive
Montgomery, AL 36130-000
334-213-3906
1-800-392-5671
334-213-3900 TTY
www.apls.state.al.us

Books Aloud: This is a "Reading by Listening" program that provides a wide variety of recorded reading material to individuals who are blind, visually impaired or physically disabled and are unable to read conventional print. Cassettes, and some CDs, are available on loan at no charge. Cassettes play on standard cassette players. Contact Books Aloud for an application and verification of disability.

Books Aloud
MLK, Jr. Library
150 East San Fernando Street
San Jose, CA 95112
408-808-2613
www.booksaloud.org

Learning Ally: This is a national nonprofit service organization using more than 5,000 volunteers at 19 sites around the nation to provide an online library of 75,000 accessible audio textbooks and literature titles to individuals who cannot read standard printed material because of a wide range of reading disabilities, including blindness, visual impairment, dyslexia,

other learning disability, or physical impairment.

Borrowers register with Learning Ally (LA) by completing an application form, which may be obtained from LA. There is a quarterly membership fee of \$49.00 or an annual membership fee of \$119.00.

www.learningally.org
1(800) 221-4792

Independent Living Resources: ILR will, for a nominal fee, transcribe print text into braille, cassette tape, or CD.

Independent Living Resources (www.ilr.org)
1839 NE Couch Street
Portland, OR 97232
503-232-7411

Large Print Materials

American Printing House for the Blind: APH sells Braille and large print textbooks, writing aids, tape recorders, etc.

American Printing House for the Blind
P.O. Box 6085
1839 Frankfort Avenue
Louisville, KY 40206
502-895-2405
1-800-223-1839
www.aph.org

Betty Crocker. This company offers popular recipes using Betty Crocker products. The Betty Crocker Cookbook is available in large print. Recipes in large print on 9 x 12 inch cards are free. A catalog is available free of charge.

General Mills, Inc.
P.O. Box 9452
Minneapolis, MN 55440
1-800-446-1898
www.bettycrocker.com

For additional cookbook titles and resources, call the Alabama Regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped or your local ADRS OASIS office.

The Doubleday Large Print Home Library:

The book club sells large print copies of latest bestsellers. First four books are 99¢ with membership plus shipping and handling. You must buy four additional books in the next 12 months at book club prices. A free catalog is available on request.

The Doubleday Large Print Book Club
1225 South Market Street
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
716-250-5700
www.doubledaylargeprint.com

Lighthouse International: The Print Access Center can convert all kinds of conventional printed material into an accessible format, by enlarging or scanning it or by translating a document into Braille

(Some restrictions apply).

Lighthouse International
111 E 59th Street
New York City, NY 10022
1-800-829-0500
www.lighthouse.org

Readers Digest Partners for Sight Large Print Books:
Publishes two large print stories in a one-volume book five times a year. Cost is \$20.

Readers Digest Partners for Sight Foundation
100 South Bedford Road Suite 340
Mt. Kisco, NY 10549
1-800-877-5293
www.partnersforsight.org

Readers Digest Large Print Books:
Large print editions of Readers Digest catalogs are available.
www.rd.com
www.readersdigest.com

News and Current Events

Radio Reading Service
Radio programming serves people who are unable to read print due to a visual impairment or who are unable to hold printed material. Radio Reading Service provides

newspaper, magazine, and book reading, consumer interest information, and entertaining features. A special receiver is required. Call for information regarding current scheduling and to obtain a receiver. The service is available in most areas of Alabama. Eligibility is identical to the requirements for the Library of Congress Talking Book Program.

Alabama Radio Reading Service

Birmingham

205-934-6576

Fax: 205-934-5075

www.wbhm.org/ARRS

Huntsville

256-895-9574

1-800-239-9574

Fax: 256-830-4577

www.wlrh.org/wlrh-radio-reading-service

Montgomery

334-670-3268

Fax: 334-670-3934

www.troypublicradio.org

Troy University Public Radio

334-241-9574

Broadcasting through:

WTSU - 89.9 - Montgomery/Troy

WRWA - 88.7 - Dothan

WTJB - 91.7 - Phenix City & Columbus, GA

NFB Newsline

National Federation of the Blind and the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped along with local sponsors provide a free service to those who qualify which reads various newspapers over the telephone. Applications may be obtained from the NFB website. An access code will be issued when the applicant is approved.

1-888-882-1629

www.nfb.org

Blindskills, Inc.

A nonprofit organization that publishes the quarterly magazine *Dialogue*, which is available in large print, Braille, and cassette tape format. *Dialogue* features first-person accounts and articles by and for visually impaired people and other interested individuals.

Issues cover a wide range of interesting topics including sports and leisure activities, fiction, and technical information on new adaptive products and services. The subscription price is \$35 per year for digital cartridge, cassette, large print, and Braille; \$25 for cartridge edition renewals; or \$20 per year for e-mail.

Blindskills, Inc.
P.O. Box 5181
Salem, OR 97304-0181
503-581-4224
1-800-860-4224
Email: info@blindskills.com
www.blindskills.com

Consumer Groups

American Council of the Blind:

ACB seeks the advancement of the social and economic interests of the blind and has local chapters throughout Alabama with more than 300 members. The Council publishes newsletters in Braille, large print, and on cassette; offers scholarships to qualified applicants; and monitors and lobbies national, state, and local government. The Alabama chapter is affiliated with the American Council of the Blind, a national nonprofit consumer interest organization.

American Council of the Blind
2200 Wilson Boulevard, Suite #650
Arlington, VA 22201
202-467-5081
800-424-8666

Alabama Council of the Blind
Norman Culver
250 Picadilly Drive, #5
Talladega, AL 35160
256-761-1050
www.alabamaacb.org

National Federation of the Blind:
NFB is a national nonprofit organization of blind persons and concerned sighted friends. The Alabama chapter has local chapters throughout the state. The NFB provides help with Social Security claims; legal assistance for problems relating to blindness; employment assistance; skills training; information and referral services; public education; interest groups for students, parents of blind children, diabetics, and professionals; and other services.

National Federation of the Blind
200 E Wells Street
Baltimore, MD 21230
410-659-9314
www.nfb.org

Joy Harris, President Alabama Chapter
5209 Sterling Glen Drive
Pinson, AL 35126
205-515-5220
www.nfbal.org

Correspondence Education

The Hadley School:

Hadley offers correspondence classes on a wide range of subjects for home study for people who are blind. The school also has a program for parents of blind children. All courses are free to all individuals who are legally blind. A selection of courses for vision professionals is also available.

Hadley School for the Blind
P.O. Box 0299
700 Elm Street
Winnetka, IL 60093-9986
800-323-4238
www.hadley.edu

The Dementia Education and Training Act (DETA)
Program provides education to professional and family caregivers regarding dementia. It enables Alabama's citizens with dementia to remain in their homes and/or communities. Free educational materials and video tapes are available. Helpline staffed by RNs and social workers.

Dementia Education and Training Act (DETA)
Program,
Bureau of Geriatric Psychiatry
Alabama Department of Mental Health
200 University Boulevard
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401
800-457-5679
205-759-0139

Daily Living Tips

American Foundation for the Blind

AFB is a national information clearinghouse on blindness. It publishes the "Directory of Agencies Serving the Visually Impaired in the US." AFB also provides resources and information via the internet at AFB.org. The website is an excellent source to help facilitate and improve daily living for people who are blind or visually impaired. The AFB Senior Site provides a wealth of information and links to sites regarding aging and vision loss.

www.visionaware.org - click on For Seniors

American Foundation for the Blind
2 Penn Plaza, Suite #1102
New York, NY 10121
212-502-7600

Braille Institute “Sound Solutions Series”

Sound Solution series is a set of various audio files that you play live from the website or download to your computer for your convenience. This service is available free of charge to persons who are visually impaired.

Braille Institute, Sound Solution Series
741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029
800-272-4553

<http://www.brailleinstitute.org/audio-library/sound-solutions.html>

Low Vision Focus @ Hadley

This program is designed to help older adults maintain independence in their home by offering practical ways to address daily living skills made difficult by low vision. The audio recordings are sent on CD. All services are free.

Hadley School for the Blind
700 Elm Street
Winnetka, IL 60093
1-855-830-5355
www.lowvisionfocus.org

Tricks and Tips

ADRS maintains a listserv providing interesting tricks and tips for independent living. For more information, contact Lenore Dillon at 1-800-441-7607.

Employment Assistance

Vocational Rehabilitation Service

This service provides free vocational rehabilitation services to eligible Alabamians with disabilities. The consumer develops an individualized plan for employment with the assistance of a rehabilitation counselor. Services may include vocational counseling, training, placement, and technology. A listing of office locations for ADRS is available on Page 6.

www.rehab.alabama.gov

1-800-441-7607

AFB Career Connect

CareerConnect is an employment information resource developed by the American Foundation for the Blind for job seekers who are blind or visually impaired. CareerConnect presents employment information, career exploration tools, and extensive job seeking guidance for students and adults with vision loss and the professionals who work with them.

www.afb.org/careerconnect

NFB America Jobline

Job listings that are fully accessible by telephone.

1-800-414-5748

Financial Resources And Banking Services

Directory Assistance Exemption:

You may qualify for exemption from charges for directory assistance calls in your area code or calls with operator-assisted dialing. To qualify for this exemption, you must sign a form certifying that you are unable to use a telephone directory. You can obtain an application for this service from the carrier of your choice.

Banking Services

Extra-large checks with boldface print and raised lines are available through most banks at varying costs. Other services such as 24-hour telephone banking and telephone bill payment, online banking, Braille bank statements and raised line checks may also be available. Inquire at your local bank for these services.

Free Matter for the Blind

Materials in Braille or large print as well as audio cassettes may be mailed free to persons with visual impairments within specific guidelines. For more information, contact your local post office.

iBill

The talking banknote currency reader “iBill” is available to any person who is blind or who has low vision and who is signed up with the Library of Congress Talking Book Services. The iBills will be distributed starting Jan. 2, 2015. To get your name on the waiting list, contact Tim Emmons at the Alabama State Library.

Tim Emmons
334 213 3908
temmons@apls.state.al.state.us

Income Tax Exemption:

A taxpayer who is legally blind may be entitled to a tax exemption on his/her federal tax return. If you have any questions regarding this exemption, call the IRS or a tax specialist.

1-800-829-3676
www.irs.gov

Social Security:

Social Security directs two disability programs — SSI and SSDI — which pay monthly benefits to eligible people. They are stepping stones to improving a person's economic condition. Work incentives are available to support people to self-sufficiency. For more information, contact Social Security for the publication "If You Are Blind or Have Low Vision - We Can Help" (Publication #05-10052).

For more information and for an office in your area, call 1-800-772-1213.

www.ssa.gov

www.socialsecurity.gov

SSI-Supplemental Security Income: To be eligible for SSI based on a medical condition, a person must:

- have little or no income, assets, or resources
- be considered medically disabled.
- not be working or working but earning less than an amount called the "substantial gainful activity" level.

SSDI - Social Security Disability Insurance:

To be eligible for SSDI a person must:

- have worked and paid Social Security taxes for enough quarters to be covered under Social Security
- be considered medically disabled
- not be working or working but earning less than an amount called the "substantial gainful activity" level
- Apply for SSI and SSDI at a local Social Security office, by phone, or online.

Healthcare, Eye Care, and Low Vision Services

Diabetes

Diabetes Hotline

A toll-free help line to provide answers to non-emergency questions is available for people with diabetes. The help line is 800-941-4635 and is available from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. eastern time Monday through Friday.

Diabetes Recipes

The Daily Diabetic Recipe service from Diabetic Gourmet Magazine sends one free recipe to subscribers every day via e-mail. Recipes include nutritional and exchange information. To obtain a random recipe or to subscribe, visit www.dailydiabeticrecipe.com.

Medicare And Medicaid

Medicare is a federal health insurance program for people age 65 or older, some people younger than 65 with disabilities, and people with end stage renal disease (permanent kidney failure requiring dialysis or a transplant). Medicare has three parts. Part A is for hospital insurance. Most people do not have to pay for Part A. Part B is a medical insurance. Most people pay a monthly premium for

Part B. Part D is for prescription drug cost assistance. Cahaba Government Benefit Administrators is a division of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama and administers Medicare in Alabama.

Medicare

Cahaba Government Benefit Administrators, LLC

P.O. Box 830139

Birmingham, AL 35283-0139

1-800-633-4227

www.medicare.gov

www.cahabagba.com

Medicaid is a state-administered health care assistance program. It is jointly financed by state and federal governments and is designed to provide health care to low-income individuals. Persons must fit into one of several categories and must meet necessary criteria before eligibility can be established. There are three agencies in Alabama that either directly or indirectly determine eligibility for Medicaid. Persons who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) from the Social Security Administration are automatically eligible for Medicaid in Alabama. Persons who receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families from the Department of Human Resources may also be eligible for Medicaid. The Alabama Medicaid Agency determines eligibility for persons who meet certain eligibility requirements. There are several different Medicaid programs, including SOBRA for pregnant women and for children, Medicare-related programs, and programs for persons who are residents of a medical institution. For more information or

the address of the district office in your area, call 1-800-362-1504. You may also apply online at www.insurealabama.org

Eye Care

Alabama Academy of Ophthalmology
Mike Merrill, Esq., Executive Director
Seaton Park Sturbridge Commons,
Montgomery, AL 36116
334-279-9755
www.alabamaeyedoctors.com

Alabama Optometric Association
1043 Ambassador Court
Montgomery, AL 36117
334-273-7895
1-800-933-9602
www.alaopt.org

Eye Care America
1-800-222-3937
www.eyecareamerica.org

This is a public service program sponsored by the Foundation of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and state ophthalmological societies. It provides medical and surgical eye care to U.S. citizens or legal residents who are 65 or older who do not have veterans vision care or an HMO and who

have not had an eye exam in the last three years. Medicare and other insurance are accepted as full payment for services. Eye care is free to those without insurance. Eye glasses are not covered.

Low Vision Services

University of Alabama at Birmingham Eye Care:

UAB Eye Care, the clinical operation for the UAB School of Optometry, provides comprehensive eye exams for low vision patients in the Ocular Disease and Low Vision Service. Our nationally recognized faculty has extensive experience with low vision patients and can help patients make informed decisions regarding low vision aids and other services. We are providers for Medicare, BCBS of Alabama, VIVA, Medicaid of Alabama, and several other medical plans. For more information and/or appointments, call 205-975-2020.

UAB
School of Optometry
Henry Peters Building
1716 University Boulevard
Birmingham, AL 35233
205-975-2020

UAB Center for Low Vision Rehabilitation

A multidisciplinary rehabilitation center with experts in optometry, ophthalmology, occupational therapy, and psychology to meet the special needs of each patient.

UAB Center for Low Vision Rehabilitation
1720 University Boulevard
Birmingham, AL 35233
205-488-0736

Community Services for Vision Rehabilitation (CSVr)

CSVr is a non-profit medical clinic with offices in Mobile and Baldwin counties featuring low vision evaluation, testing and counseling by a medical doctor who is also a Certified Low Vision Therapist. Occupational Therapists also provide training in activities of daily living, environmental modifications, visual skills training, and use of devices and magnifiers. Each office has a full inventory of glasses, optical aids, and electronic magnifiers. Free computer adaptive software workshops and support groups are available. Emphasis is placed on maximizing function, independence and quality of life for the visually impaired. www.csvrlowvision.org

Fairhope
29653 Anchor Cross Boulevard
Daphne, AL 36526
251-928-2888

Mobile
600 Bel Air Boulevard, Suite #110
Mobile, AL 36606
251-476-4744

Montgomery
3054 McGehee Road
Montgomery, AL 36111
334-782-3557

Liz Moore Low Vision Center at St. Vincent's East:
The Liz Moore Low Vision Center's goal is to assist the person with low vision to use functional vision to the utmost capacity. Services provided are evaluation, training, counseling, referral, and a low vision support group.

Liz Moore Low Vision Center
St. Vincent's East
46 Medical Park East Drive, Suite #475
Birmingham, AL 35235
205-838-3167 option 4

Independent Living Centers:

Disability Rights and Resources (formerly Independent Living Services of Greater Birmingham): This is a nonprofit consumer-controlled resource center providing services designed to enhance the ability of people with disabilities to live more independently. Services include independent living skills training, housing modifications, advocacy, producing Braille, peer counseling, computer training, and additional information or referral.

Alabaster Office

120 Plaza Circle, Suite C

Alabaster, AL 35027

205-685-0570

gwen.brown@drradvocates.org

Birmingham Office

1418 6th Avenue North

Birmingham, AL 35203

205-251-2223

drradvocates@drradvocates.org

Counties Served: Blount, Jefferson, Shelby, St. Clair,
Walker

Jasper Office

300 Birmingham Avenue

Jasper, AL 35502

205-387-0159

vickie.stovall@drradvocates.org

Oneonta Office

1000 Lincoln Ave., Box 6

Oneonta, AL 35121

205-274-0174

josh.whitmire@drradvocates.org

Center for Independent Living - Mobile

5301 Moffett Road, Suite #110

Mobile, AL 36618

251-460-0301

www.ilcmobile.org

Counties Served: Baldwin, Clarke, Choctaw,
Escambia, Mobile, Monroe, Washington

Center for Independent Living - Montgomery

324 Catoma Street

Montgomery, AL 36104

334-240-2520

www.cilmontgomery.org

Counties Served: Montgomery, Elmore, Autauga

Recreation and Exercise

Alabama Wildlife Divison

The State of Alabama manages 17 hunting sites around the state that are accessible to people with disabilities. An application to hunt on these sites can be obtained from the Alabama Wildlife Division at 334-242-3469. You must have a doctor fill out the form about your disability and have it signed in front of a notary. Annually, applicants are mailed a list of the sites which can be booked on a first come first serve basis. There is no charge for the application or the use of the sites.

Lakeshore Foundation

Located in Homewood, the mission of the Lakeshore Foundation is to enable people with physical disability and

chronic health conditions to lead healthy, active and independent lifestyles through physical activity, sport, recreation and research. Membership is based on a qualifying condition and medical documentation. A list of eligible conditions is on their website, www.lakeshore.org

Montgomery Parks and Recreation Department Therapeutic Recreation Center (TRC)

For use by persons with permanent mental or physical disabilities who cannot actively participate in other fitness programs. Indoor pool, outdoor pool, fitness room, and VIP pool exercise programs are available. To obtain a participation form, call 334-240-4575.

Outdoors Without Limits

Outdoors without Limits is a non-profit organization that hosts hunting and fishing events for people with disabilities, including those who are blind and low vision. Membership is \$20. For more information, visit their website.

<http://www.outdoorswithoutlimits.net/>

U.S. Park Service:

The U.S. Park Service offers an Access Pass (formerly called the Golden Access Passport) providing free lifetime admission to national parks, monuments, historic sites, recreational areas, and national wildlife refuges. It also provides a discount on expanded amenity fees such as camping, boating, launching, and guided tours. An Access Pass must be

obtained in person at any federal area where an entrance fee is charged or at the National Park Service in Washington by showing proof of medically determined permanent disability or eligibility for receiving benefits under federal law.

National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
www.nps.gov

Shopping Services

Grocery Store: Most supermarkets will provide a shopping assistant to help you locate your selections. Call your local market for information on services they offer.

Personal Shoppers: Many department stores offer personal shoppers for their customers to provide input on colors, styles, sizes, and other needs you might have. You can make an appointment with a personal shopper to get shopping assistance for yourself or for gift shopping for someone else by calling the store.

Support Groups

For information about meeting times and locations, call the numbers listed or the local ADRS OASIS office, which is listed on page P.

Alabaster

Shelby County Low Vision Support Group
205-665-2489

Athens/Limestone

Positive Look
256-232-1493

Autauga County - Prattville

Prattville Council for the Blind
334-365-2360

Baldwin County

EYES on Living
251-517-7278

EYES Have It
251-490-8389

Struggling Eyes
251-478-2143

Blount County - Oneonta

Blount County Low Vision Support Group
205-274-8199

Calhoun, Cleburne, Randolph & St. Clair

A New Vision Support Group

256-240-8800

Cherokee County

Cherokee County Low Vision Support Group

256-475-3351

Clanton

Chilton County Insight Support Group

205-290-4308

Colbert County

Shoals Sight Seekers

256-381-1110

Covington County

Covington Visually Impaired Persons Outreach

334-428-3335

Cullman

New Vision

256-739-4653

Dallas County

Selma VIP's

334-354-4015

DeKalb County

DeKalb County Support Group
256-549-7790

Dothan

Wiregrass Visually Impaired Person's
334-677-6270

Etowah County-Gadsden

The Visors
256-467-3792

Franklin County

New Outlook
256-332-4234

Green/Hale County

New Hope/New Vision Impair Support Group
205-372-0697

Huntsville

VIP'S
256-539-7881

Jefferson County

Insights

205-823-7457

Townvillage Low Vision Support Group

205-979-2702

We Can-Visual Impairment Support Group

205-328-3989

Macon County

Tuskegee/Macon County Support Group for the Blind VI

334-727-0962

Marshall County

Marshall County Support Group

256-840-1974

Mobile County

Mobile Low Vision Club

251-432-7777

Montgomery

Montgomery VIP's

334-241-5133

Outward Sight/Inward Vision

334-272-6152

Moulton/Lawrence

New Hope Low Vision Support Group
256-974-6261

North Shelby County

North Shelby Low Vision Support Group
205-995-5009

Scottsboro

Jackson County Visually Impaired Support Group
256-912-0680

Sumter County

New Hope/New Vision Impair Support Group
205-372-0697

Tuscaloosa

Tuscaloosa OASIS
205-758-8949

Walker County

VIP Support Group of Jasper
205-221-1514
205-221-1514

Technology Assistance

Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind

AIDB can provide assistance with using assistive technology. Contact the local regional center for information about these services. A listing of AIDB Regional Centers is located on Page 13.

Statewide Technology Access and Response (STAR)

STAR offers training and funding information for assistive technology and holds presentations and workshops about assistive technology throughout Alabama. It is centrally located in Montgomery with regional offices in Huntsville, Birmingham, Montgomery and Mobile. Services include training and workshops, technology demonstration, equipment loans, financial loan program, equipment recycling and information referral. These services are free and available to consumers as well as professionals regardless of disability or age.

Statewide Technology Access and Response
602 South Lawrence Street
Montgomery, AL 36104
334-293-7500
1-800-782-7656
1-800-441-7607

Mobility and Travel

Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services

The Department of Rehabilitation Services provides orientation and mobility training services to eligible individuals through a variety of programs. This training may include sighted guide, use of a white cane, and public transportation. Refer to the listing on page 7 for local ADRS offices.

Dog Guide Schools

There are quite a few dog guide schools in the United States. Most schools require students to attend an on-site training period that lasts about four weeks followed by training in the student's home community, when necessary. Most schools provide the training, room, board, and dog at no cost to the student. Many also provide financial assistance for the dog's feeding and care. Some schools will provide dogs to students who have additional disabling conditions. For more information about dog guides, speak to an orientation and mobility specialist with the Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services.

Parking Permits

Accessible parking permits: Permits are linked to the person's driver's license or identification card who has a disability. Each time the license or ID card is renewed, the person must submit a certificate of disability. Alabama issues distinctive parking permits to people with disabilities. Vehicles which display these permits may park

in designated parking spaces and are allowed other parking privileges. To qualify for a parking permit, a person must have:

- loss of vision or substantial loss of visual acuity or visual field beyond correction
- severely limited mobility because of paralysis or the loss of use of some or all of the person's legs or arms
- any other disability that prevents the person from walking without the use of an assistive device or that causes the person to be unable to walk more than 200 feet, including but not necessarily limited to:
 - Chronic heart condition
 - Emphysema
 - Arthritis
 - Rheumatism or
 - Ulcerative colitis or related chronic bowel disorder

Applicants are required to have a current valid Alabama driver's license or identification card.

To apply for a disabled person parking permit your disability must be certified by a licensed physician on an application form which is available at your local probate office.

Travel Agencies

Below are travel agencies which tailor their plans for individuals who are blind and low vision. Contact them for more information on their services.

Mind's Eye Travel

www.mindseyetravel.com

207-542-4438

Traveleyes International

<https://www.traveleyes-international.com/>

Transportation

Contact your local Area Agency on Aging office for information about transportation in your area. Most counties charge people with disabilities reduced fares on local public transportation.

Birmingham Area: MAX (Metropolitan Area Express:

The Birmingham Jefferson County Transit Authority operates the MAX fixed-route service within the Birmingham -Jefferson County metro area. Senior citizens age 65 and older may ride the fixed-route bus for half-fare with the BJCTA photo ID. Citizens with the red, white and blue Medicare card can ride half-fare with a photo ID, or a BJCTA Access pass. Para-transit services are available for persons with disabilities or seniors who are unable to get to, and board a fixed-route bus without assistance, who live within the service area, and are within three-quarters of a mile of the fixed bus route. This is a curb-to-curb service. Call 205-521-0101.

CLASTRAN:

CLASTRAN was created to meet the transportation needs of senior citizens and persons with disabilities living outside the MAX/VIP routes of Jefferson, Walker, and Shelby counties. Due to the expanded area, service fares may vary. For more information, please call 205-325-8787.

Mobile Area:

Baldwin Area Transportation System (BRATS) Call between 7:a.m.-3:p.m. for information regarding routes and fares.

Central and South Baldwin
251-972-6817

Eastern Shore
251-990-4636

North Baldwin
251-937-0355

Montgomery Area:

Montgomery Area Council on Aging (MACOA): MACOA Taxi Service is for persons age 65 and older. This service operates Monday through Friday, 24 hours a day to transport senior citizens to doctor appointments and/or to the closest grocery store only. This service is available in Montgomery, Autauga, and Elmore counties. Cost is \$3 one way. 334-263-0532.

MAP: Montgomery Area Para-transit provides curb-to-curb service between 5:00am and 9:30pm, and may be booked up to two weeks in advance on a first come first serve basis. Cost is \$2 one way. You must call at least one day in advance. An application for this service must be approved by a doctor or other social service professional. Call to obtain an application at 334-240-4691.

Travel Discounts

Amtrak: Amtrak offers a 15 percent discounted "rail only" (no sleeping cars) fare for individuals with disabilities. A letter from a doctor certifying a disability and a picture identification card must be presented to receive this discount.

Amtrak
800-872-7245
800-523-6590 TTY
www.amtrak.com

Greyhound: Greyhound offers a program providing a 5% discount for persons age 62 and older on unrestricted fares. A companion traveler may ride with a disabled individual at a 50 percent discount, provided reservations are made three days in advance. To receive this concession you must present either a picture identification card or a letter from your doctor certifying that you have a disability.

Greyhound Disabilities Travel Assistance Line
800-752-4841

Contact 48 hours in advance

Greyhound

800-231-2222

www.greyhound.com

Most bus companies will accept a ID card and/or a certification of blindness for a discount.

Air Travel

For air travel, individuals who are blind may request either “Meet and Assist” or “Ground Assistance” services (including wheelchair) for assistance locating gates and getting on the plane. Call the airline representative or travel agent for details and request the brochure entitled “Disabled Traveler Information.”

Birmingham International Airport

5900 Airport Highway

Birmingham, AL 35212

205-595-0533

Huntsville International Airport

1000 Glenn Hearn Boulevard

Huntsville, AL 35824

256-772-9395

Mobile Regional Airport

8400 Airport Boulevard

Mobile, AL 36608

251-633-0313

Montgomery Regional Airport
Dannelly Field
4445 Selma Highway
Montgomery, AL 36108
334-281-5040

Voting

Voter registration forms are available at all ADRS offices.
A listing of locations is on Page 6.

Absentee Ballot

Absentee ballots are available on request for all state elections from the county circuit clerk's office.

Polling Places and Booths

Polling places are required to be readily accessible for people with disabilities. An individual with a disability can select a person of his or her choice to accompany him/her into the polling place or booth to assist in voting. Registration and Statewide Technology Access and Response 602 voting aids to assist individuals with disabilities in the process of registering and voting are available from appropriate election officials in each county.

Voter ID Requirements:

Beginning June 2014, Act 2011-673 requires an

Alabama voter to have a specific type of photo identification at the polls in order to vote. If a voter does not have one of the approved forms of photo ID as stated in the law, then he or she may receive a free Alabama photo voter ID from various locations including the Secretary of State's Office, local county board of registrars offices, and a mobile location to be determined by the Secretary of State's Office.

For more information on voting:

1-800-274-8683

www.alabamavotes.gov

Non-drivers Identification Card

Local probate offices can issue a picture identification card to any Alabama resident. The card can be used for identification, check cashing, age verification, etc. I

Notes

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